

**APPENDIX A-1**  
**Office of Management and Budget**  
**Bulletin 95-01:**  
**Establishment of Government Information Locator Service**



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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
Washington, DC 20503

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OMB BULLETIN NO. 95-01

TO THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ESTABLISHMENTS

SUBJECT: Establishment of Government Information Locator Service.

1. Purpose. This Bulletin establishes a Government Information Locator Service (GILS), as envisioned in The National Information Infrastructure: Agenda for Action, Information Infrastructure Task Force (September 15, 1993).
2. Authority. OMB Circular No. A-130, "Management of Federal Information Resources," Transmittal Memorandum No. 1, dated June 25, 1993 (58 Fed. Reg.36068, July 2, 1993), reissued on July 25, 1994 (59 Fed. Reg. 37906).
3. Applicability. This Bulletin applies to all departments and agencies in the Executive Branch. Independent regulatory commissions and agencies are requested to comply.
4. Agency and OMB Responsibilities. Attachment A hereto sets forth the applicable definitions, specifications, implementation schedule, agency responsibilities, and information contacts. GILS will identify public information resources throughout the Federal government, describe the information available in those resources, and provide assistance in obtaining the information. It will also serve as a tool to improve agency electronic records management practices.
5. Termination Date. This Bulletin expires three years from date of issuance.
6. Effective Date. This Bulletin is effective on issuance.

[signed]

Alice M. Rivlin  
Director

Attachment A  
Establishment of Government Information Locator Service

1. Background. This Bulletin establishes the Government Information Locator Service (GILS) to help the public and agencies locate and access information throughout the U.S. government. It is issued in furtherance of OMB Circular No. A-130, which encourages agencies to ensure public access to government information regardless of form or medium and to establish aids to locating agency information, such as catalogs and directories. The creation of GILS is a goal of The National Information Infrastructure: Agenda for Action which called for the establishment of a "virtual card catalog" of government information holdings. GILS will identify information

resources throughout the Executive Branch, describe the information available, and provide assistance in how to obtain the information. It will improve agencies' abilities to carry out their records management responsibilities and to respond to Freedom of Information Act requests. It will also serve to reduce the information collection burden on the public by making existing information more readily available for sharing among agencies.

GILS will consist of decentralized agency-based information locator records and associated information services. It will use off-the-shelf communications and information technology products and services so that government information can be stored and retrieved in a variety of ways and in a variety of locations.

2. Definitions. As used herein:

"Automated information system" means a discrete set of information resources organized using information technology as defined in OMB Circular No. A-130 for the collection, processing, maintenance, transmission, or dissemination of information which include Federal records as defined in 44 U.S.C. 3301. For purposes of this Bulletin, automated information systems do not include (1) electronic mail and word processing systems, (2) systems the existence of which are specifically authorized under criteria established by an Executive Order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy within the meaning of 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(1), and (3) systems the knowledge of the existence of which would interfere with enforcement proceedings or otherwise be exempt from disclosure under 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(7).

"GILS Core" means a subset of all GILS locator records which describe information resources maintained by Federal agencies, comply with the GILS core elements defined in Federal Information Processing Standards Publication (FIPS Pub.) 192, and are mutually accessible through interconnected electronic network facilities.

"Information dissemination product" means any book, paper, map, machine-readable material, audiovisual production, or other documentary material, regardless of physical form or characteristic, disseminated by an agency to the public. (OMB Circular A-130).

"Locator" means an information resource which identifies other information resources, describes the information available in those resources, and provides assistance in how to obtain the information.

3. Policy.

Section 8(a) of OMB Circular A-130 provides that agencies have a responsibility to "record, preserve and make accessible sufficient information to ensure the management and accountability of agency programs and to protect both legal and financial rights of the Federal Government... provide information to the public consistent with their mission... [and] help the public locate government information maintained by and for the agency." Inventories and finding aids can be an important tool to help other agencies and the public identify information which is available, as well as to help agencies carry out their responsibilities effectively to manage, schedule for disposition and archive their electronic records. Inventories also serve both to increase the efficiency of the dissemination function and to avoid unnecessary burdens of duplicative information collections. The inventories of agency automated information systems and information dissemination products that are reflected in the GILS Core will serve these ends.

Agencies may provide access to their GILS Core locator records either using their own information resources, through an information processing service organization in another agency, through an interagency cooperative effort, or through a contractor. Each agency should establish one or more channels for access to its GILS Core locator records, balancing the goals of facilitating access by the public, assuring appropriate security of government information resources, and minimizing costs to the Government. Direct Internet access to GILS Core locator records should be free of charge, particularly to depository libraries, other libraries, and members of the public with Internet access. Other information dissemination products which include GILS records should be priced in accordance with the provisions of Circular A-130.

Agency GILS are to be established and maintained in accordance with FIPS Pub. 192. As specified in FIPS Pub. 192, the GILS Profile provides the mechanisms for navigating among Federal government locators through specifications given for the GILS Core locator records. Direct users of GILS must be able to use nonproprietary software to access and retrieve information from information sources conforming to FIPS Pub. 192 and the associated GILS Profile. Public domain software that supports access to GILS will be available from the Government Printing Office, the National Technical Information Service, and the Clearinghouse for Networked Information Discovery and Retrieval. GILS will become an integral part of the Federal government's overall information management and dissemination infrastructure, and will ultimately facilitate both identification and direct retrieval of government information. As a first step, agencies should inventory their existing holdings and institute adequate information management practices. To the extent practicable, agency GILS should contain automated links to underlying databases to permit direct access to information identified in the GILS.

4. Responsibilities.

a. All Federal Agencies. The head of each agency should:

- (1) By December 31, 1995, compile an inventory of its 1) automated information systems, 2) Privacy Act systems of records, and 3) locators that together cover all of its information dissemination products. Each such automated information system, Privacy Act system of records, and locator of information dissemination products shall be described by a GILS Core locator record that includes the mandatory GILS Core Elements, and appropriate optional GILS Core Elements as defined in FIPS Pub. 192 and 36 CFR 1228.22(b). Agencies should also supplement the GILS Core Elements with other data elements suitable for specific agency records management and information dissemination needs and objectives. Similar information dissemination products and automated information systems may be identified by a single GILS Core locator record, provided that the locator record clearly identifies the number and scope of items aggregated. Privacy Act systems of records should, however, be identified individually.
- (2) By December 31, 1995, make its initial GILS Core locator records available on-line in a form compliant with FIPS Pub. 192 and the related application profile.
- (3) By June 30, 1996, review the information resources identified in the agency inventory of automated information systems and GILS Core locator records for completeness and to determine the extent to which they include Federal records as defined at 44 U.S.C. 3301. For all Federal records covered by the inventory, the agency shall determine whether they are covered by a records disposition schedule authorized by the Archivist of the United States.
- (4) By December 31, 1996, submit to the Archivist a request for disposition authority proposing schedules for unscheduled records in the information resources described in the GILS Core locator records. The agency should also advise the Archivist if it believes any information resource described in the GILS Core locator records has sufficient historical or other value to warrant continued preservation after the information is no longer needed in the agency.

The inventories of agency automated information systems and information dissemination products that are reflected in the GILS Core should serve as the foundation for developing the records schedules proposed by the agency. When an agency needs to retain different categories of records covered by a GILS Core locator record for different periods of time, the agency should supplement the GILS Core locator record by describing each category. Agencies should cite the applicable disposition authority in the GILS Core element for "supplemental information" for entries that cover records that have been scheduled.

When information dissemination products are part of an on-going series, the agency may submit a proposed records schedule which applies to the entire series. The schedule entry describing such a series may refer to GILS Core locator records to supplement the series description included in the request.

- (5) Continually update its inventory and GILS Core locator records as new information dissemination products and automated information systems are identified.
- b. Department of Commerce. The Secretary of Commerce should:
  - (1) Designate an initial Chair for the Government Information Locator Services Board, established pursuant to section 5, below.
  - (2) Maintain FIPS Pub. 192 specifying a GILS Profile with mandatory application for Federal agencies establishing locators and inventories of government information.
  - (3) Determine the need for and develop procedures, as appropriate, to identify and validate commercial software packages for compliance with FIPS Pub. 192.
- c. National Archives and Records Administration. The Archivist of the United States should:
  - (1) Publish guidance and provide, on a reimbursable basis, training to Federal agencies on the development of records inventories, determining records retention needs, and on describing information dissemination products and automated information systems using GILS Core Elements.
  - (2) Use GILS entries as an information resource in its records disposition and evaluation programs.
  - (3) Cooperate with agencies to reduce reporting burdens and facilitate scheduling of records by accepting GILS data entries when they provide the information required on Standard Form 115, Request for Records Disposition Authority.
- d. General Services Administration. The Administrator for General Services should include commercial software packages that implement FIPS Pub. 192 on appropriate Federal Supply Schedules.
- e. Interagency Committees. Interagency committees which promote access to and use of Federal information are encouraged to coordinate the efforts of their participating agencies in developing their respective GILS inventories and interagency topical locators when appropriate to their respective missions. Where there is a consensus on the high secondary use value of basic data maintained by multiple agencies, interagency committees should coordinate the development of aggregate information products to meet specific needs identified by communities of interest. These committees include, but are not limited to, the Committees of the National Science and Technology Council, the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC), the Commerce, Energy, NASA, NLM, Defense Information Committee (CENDI), and the Federal Information Resources Management Policy Council (FIRMPOC).
- f. Information Processing Service Organizations. Any agency that operates an information processing service organization, as defined in OMB Circular No. A-130, capable of providing on-line access, or other dissemination service, suitable for providing public and interagency access to the GILS, may provide such service for other agencies on a cost reimbursable basis.
5. Government Information Locator Service Board. There is established a Government Information Locator Service Board to evaluate the development and operation of the GILS. Membership on the Board will include representatives of the Director, Office of Management and Budget, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of the Interior, the Archivist of the United States, and the Administrator of General Services. The Public Printer and the Librarian of Congress will be invited to participate as appropriate. The Board may ask the heads of other agencies to designate representatives to serve on the Board or on task forces established by the Board, and should regularly seek comment from State and local governmental entities, interested non-governmental organizations and the public on the operation of the GILS. The Board will prepare and disseminate publicly an annual report that evaluates and recommends enhancements to GILS to meet user information needs, including factors such as accessibility, ease of use, suitability of descriptive language, as well as the accuracy, consistency, timeliness and completeness of coverage.

6. Information contacts.

General policy questions: Peter N. Weiss, Information Policy Branch, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Room 10236, New Executive Office Building, Washington DC 20503. Telephone: (202) 395-3630.

Records management and archival questions: James J. Hastings, Director, Records Appraisal and Disposition Division, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. 20408. Telephone: (301) 713-7096.

Questions regarding FIPS Pub. 192: Shirley Radack, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg MD 20899. Telephone: (301) 975-2833.

General technical questions: Eliot Christian, Information Systems Division, United States Geological Survey, 802 National Center, Reston, VA 22092. Telephone: (703) 648-7245. Electronic mail: echristi@usgs.gov.

7. No Private Right of Action. Nothing in this Bulletin shall be construed to confer a private right of action on any person.

[Available: URL <<http://www.usgs.gov/gils/omb95-01.html>>]

